

ALTERNATIVE PLAN SUBMITTAL SHEET

School Administrative Unit Submitting Alternative Plan:

- Acton School Department

Contact Information:

Name: Alton L. Hadley, III
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Acton
ME 04001
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Date Plan Submitted by SAU: June 15, 2010

The intent to submit an alternative plan has been approved by the Commissioner in the approval of the Notice of Intent?

☒ YES

☐ NO

(If NO, please explain.)

**Acton School Department
Alternative Plan Contents**

1. Submittal Sheet
2. Alternative Plan Cover Sheet
3. Exceptions to 2,500 minimum check sheet
4. Exhibit A - Alternative Plan
5. Exhibit B- Exceptions to 2,500 minimum, Documentation
6. Exhibit C- Alternative Plan Budget Information
 - a. System Administration
 - b. Operation & Maintenance of Facilities
 - c. Special Education
 - d. Transportation
7. FY 11 Assurances, Documentation
8. Additional Efficiency Goals

Alternative Plan Cover Sheet

(Please attach Alternative Plan as Exhibit A)

Plan Requirements				
Item	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet Started	Need Assistance ¹
Plan addresses how the SAU will reorganize administrative functions, duties and noninstructional personnel so that projected expenditures of RSU in fiscal 2008-2009 for the following areas will not have an adverse impact on the instructional program.				
system administration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
special education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
facilities and maintenance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan addresses how cost savings will be achieved in fiscal 2008-2009 for the above four areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parameters for Plan Development				
Enrollment meets requirements (2,500 except where circumstances justify an exception)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When viewed in conjunction with surrounding proposed units, may not result in one or more municipalities being denied the option to join an RSU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Includes at least one publicly supported high school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consistent with policies set forth in section 1451	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of teachers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No closures of schools existing or operating during school year immediately preceding reorganization, except as permitted under section 1512	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative Agreements				
		Yes	No	
Does your plan currently include information/documentation on collaborative agreements? (not required, but encouraged)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

¹ Please explain what assistance you need to complete this portion of your plan, and state from whom you need assistance, on the next page.

Actual number of students for which the SAU is fiscally responsible: 403

Exception	Exception Claimed in Plan	Documentation Provided? (Please attach as Exhibit B)	
		Yes	No
Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Economics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Population Density	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Unique Circumstances	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Assistance Needs –

Please use this section to describe your needs for assistance and from whom you need assistance.

Law Reference/Required Element	Explanation of your assistance need	Assistance needed from whom?

ALTERNATIVE PLAN
Exhibit A

SAU Submitting: **Acton School Department**

Contact Information: **Alton L. Hadley, III**
Superintendent of Schools
207.636.2100
ahadley@acton.k12.me.us

Date Submitted by SAU: **June 15, 2010**

The Acton School Department for over two and one-half years made overtures to surrounding communities seeking a willing partnership to form an RSU. Meetings were held with MSAD 60, conversations were held with MSAD 57, and serious discussions were held with the Sanford School Committee. None of the talks were successful in identifying a partner. Finally, following negotiations with Wells-Ogunquit School System an Alternative Organizational Structure was formed and taken to the voters. The plan was rejected by all of the communities.

Despite the due diligence and considerable effort, the RPC was unable to overcome key barriers to consolidation. The major hurdle that prevented consolidation was the high school tuition contract with Sanford. Another barrier was the differences in town valuations that prevented significant cost savings to any of the communities. The difficulties in reconciling contractual differences were also a barrier that prevented conversations from going forward.

The Acton Community, feeling that it had done the due diligence that the law required, made the decision to pursue an exemption as a "donut hole". Following a meeting with the School Attorney, the Commissioner, Legislative Representatives from Acton, Acton School Committee and members of the RPC, the School Committee felt confident that Acton would receive the exemption. Unfortunately, the exemption was denied and the School Committee received word that unless they consolidated they would have the penalty applied in 2010/2011.

In the spring of 2010, adjustments were made in the law that had an impact on AOS plans. At the Commissioners request, the Committee turned to Sanford School Department and were again told no. Even though Acton and Sanford do a great deal of collaboration, Sanford felt that it was not in their best interest to consolidate with Acton. Following Sanford's expression of not willing to consolidate, the Commissioner has granted Acton a "donut hole" exemption. This is Acton's submission of an Alternative Plan as required under the law.

Acton School Department
Alternative Plan

Exhibit B

Exceptions to 2,500 Minimum

Other Unique Circumstances

Because of our unique circumstances, Acton School Department is submitting an Alternative Plan as a "Donut Hole".

Documentation:

PART XXXX

Sec. XXXX-1. 20-A MRSA §1, sub-§20-A is enacted to read:

Sec. 4. 20- A MRSA §1461, sub-§3,(C)(1)(b)

C. Notwithstanding paragraph B, subparagraph 1, the Commissioner may approve:

- (1) A regional school unit to serve fewer than 1,200 students but not less than 1,000 students in an isolated rural community, including, for purposes of this paragraph, students attending from the organized territory, if the proposed regional meets at least one of the following criteria:
 - (b) The member municipalities of the proposed regional school unit are surrounded by approved regional school units or alternative organizational structures and there are no other school administrative units available to join the proposed regional school unit; or
- (2) The formation of a regional school unit if the governing body or bodies of the proposed regional school unit demonstrate, in the notice of intent under subsection 1, that all reasonable and practicle means of satisfying the requirements of subparagraph (1) and paragraph B, subparagraph (1) have been exhausted, and that approval is warranted based on the unique or particular circumstances of the unit or units.

**Acton School Department
Alternative Plan
Exhibit C: System Administration**

Cost Saving Initiatives/Rationale

1. The Acton School Committee has addressed System Administration by reducing the Superintendent to two days per week. This is a reduction of salary in the past two years of \$17,100.
2. The Acton School Committee has been discussing with the Sanford School Department the possibility of purchasing management services. That is an on going discussion that has the potential of cost savings in system administration as we go forward.
3. The School Committee has \$25,000 in the legal line that was earmarked to pursue the "donut hole" exemption. Since the Commissioner has now granted that exemption, those funds will not likely be expended.

**ACTON SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
ALTERNATIVE PLAN
EXHIBIT C: SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION**

MEDMS FY 09	BUDGET FY 10	BUDGET FY 11
\$225,236	\$211,591	\$218,546

Acton School Department
Alternative Plan
Exhibit C: operation & Maintenance of Facilities

Cost Saving Initiatives/Rationale

1. This account has been reduced by \$15,357 by cutting back on some of the normal maintenance projects. This will create a hardship as we go forward since our buildings will begin to show wear and tear.
2. There is a potential savings in our fuel account of \$5,000 because of a lower heating fuel bid than we budgeted for.
3. The Acton School Committee is committed to maintaining its facility and will continue to budget the necessary funds to assure that there are no longer deferred maintenance costs as there have been in the past.

**ACTON SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
ALTERNATIVE PLAN
EXHIBIT C: OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES**

**MEDMS
FY 09**

**BUDGET
FY 10**

**BUDGET
FY 11**

\$379,942

\$395,293

\$379,936

**Acton School Department
Alternative Plan
Exhibit C: Special Education**

Cost Saving Initiatives/Rationale

1. The Acton School Committee has reduced the Special Education Director from a FTE position to a 3/5th position for the 2010/2011 Budget because of declining special education numbers in grades K-8.
2. The Acton School Committee has arranged for Sanford School Department to provide special education oversight for Acton students receiving special education services grades 9-12 at Sanford High School.
3. Under Special Education, the Acton School Department has operated a small/handicapped school bus to transport small groups of special education students during the school year. It also provided transportation for regular education students as well during our summer school program. That operation has been discontinued and reflects a savings of \$53,642 in 2010/2011 and subsequent years.

**ACTON SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
ALTERNATIVE PLAN
EXHIBIT C: SPECIAL EDUCATION**

MEDMS FY 09	BUDGET FY 10	BUDGET FY 11
\$873,437	\$956,558	\$848,486

**Acton School Department
Alternative Plan
Exhibit C: Transportation**

Cost Saving Initiatives/Rationale

1. Acton is in the final year of a three-year Transportation contract with First Student. The Acton School Committee will be discussing a new contract in the fall of 2010/2011. In preparation of those negotiations we propose the following:
 - a. Establish a committee to review policies regarding walking distances for students. The goal will be to determine if we can reduce the length of bus routes.
 - b. Conduct a ridership study of secondary students attending Sanford High School to determine the correct number of buses needed to efficiently transport students.
2. It is our goal to reduce transportation costs through efficiency and negotiations by 5% in 2011/2012.

**ACTON SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
ALTERNATIVE PLAN
EXHIBIT C: TRANSPORTATION**

MEDMS FY 09	BUDGET FY 10	BUDGET FY 11
\$215,228	\$220,582	\$228,420

FY 11 Assurances

P.L. 207, Chapter 240, Part XXXX-36 (6)(F) that “... the projected expenditures in FY 2010-2011 for system administration, transportation, special education, and facilities and maintenance will not have an adverse impact on the instructional program”

The Acton School Department has thoroughly examined its educational needs and has evaluated its services and cost associated with doing business in Acton. The School Committee and the community are fully committed to offering a program of studies that meets the requirements of the Maine Learning Results as well as offering a well-rounded educational opportunity for all Acton children.

The projected expenditures for system administration, transportation, special education, and facilities and maintenance will not have an adverse impact on the instructional programs offered by the Acton School Department.

Additional Steps to Achieve Efficiency Goals:

As part of a previously agreed upon collaborative agreement with the Sanford School Department, Acton will continue to aggressively pursue further collaborative relationships, some of which are listed below.

Acton School Department will participate, to the extent feasible, in Collaboration with Sanford School Department with the goal of sharing services, resources, and expertise to maintain and promote the excellence of education. We will concentrate on services, such as:

- Fiscal consultation
- Technology and data processing
- Library services
- Insurance coverage
- Energy conservation and management
- Staff development
- Curriculum development
- Student testing and evaluation
- Special education services- 9-12
- Bulk purchasing of supplies
- Distance Learning
- Nutrition Program
- Heating fuel contracts
- Management services
- High School Contract

Activities:

1. Representatives from each of the participating school departments will meet on an as needed basis yearly to discuss and review existing organizational structures.
2. Professional development activities will be planned and shared opportunities will be the norm.
3. On-going conversations and cooperative agreements with neighboring school systems will be fostered & encouraged through the York County Superintendents Association.

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Office of the Superintendent

Alton L. Hadley, III
SUPERINTENDENT

Carlene Doyle
FINANCE DIRECTOR

June 13, 2010

Angela R. Faherty
Acting Commissioner
Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

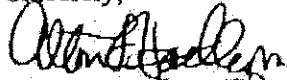
Dear Commissioner Faherty:

As a result of your recent letter that determined Acton's qualification as a "donut hole" exception under P.L. 2007, chapter 240, Part XXXX-36, Parameter 6(A)(7) as amended by Title 20-A MRSA, section 1461, sub-3(C)(1)(b), I am submitting this alternative plan on behalf of the Acton School Committee.

Our plan demonstrates savings in system administration, special education, transportation, and facilities and maintenance. More importantly, we stand ready to work collaboratively with Sanford and other school districts in York County to provide the students a quality k-12 education.

I am confident that this plan will put us on track toward achievement of the goal of school administrative restructuring. Thank you for your consideration of this plan.

Sincerely,



Alton L. Hadley, III
Superintendent of Schools

CC: School Committee